

Proposed closure of Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School

Overview

Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School (“Carleton Elementary or Carleton”) was severely damaged by fire in 2016 and has not been used for student learning since.

At the public board meeting held on June 26, 2023, the Board approved a motion to begin a public consultation process in accordance with Board Policy 14 – School Closure. On October 1, 2025, the Vancouver School Board restarted the public engagement process for the proposed closure of Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School.

The Board paused engagement to review how provincial housing changes and updated city zoning would affect enrolment. Updated enrolment projections were completed in June 2025 and the projections confirmed nearby schools can continue to accommodate students in the short and long-term.

On October 1, 2025, the Vancouver School Board restarted the public engagement process for the proposed closure of Carleton Elementary School.

The Board is seeking public input as part of the process outlined in Policy 14 – School Closure. Feedback received from the public through various forms of engagement will be considered by the Board when making a final decision at the special public Board meeting in December 2025.

Background

Carleton has not enrolled students since 2016 after a fire left the main school building unsuitable for use. At the time, students from the Carleton Elementary catchment were redirected to Cunningham, Weir and MacCorkindale elementary schools.

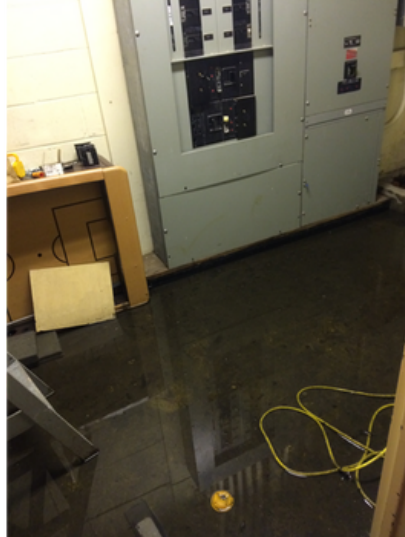
In January 2023, the Carleton catchment was officially redistributed among Cunningham, Weir, and MacCorkindale elementary schools to ensure students attend their closest neighbourhood school.

Students in the area will continue to be accommodated at nearby schools.

Why Closure Is Being Considered

▼ + The property is not used as a school

- Carleton Elementary has not enrolled students since the 2015–2016 school year following a fire.
- The provincial government did not approve multiple funding requests from VSB to repair and seismically upgrade the school.
- The school buildings are significantly damaged and not suitable for use.
- The site is vulnerable to vandalism, graffiti and flooding, and continues to deteriorate.
- Significant resources are spent every year for maintenance, security, inspections, groundskeeping and utilities at this non-enrolling site.
- To return the school to a suitable condition, a full replacement would be required and would need major capital funding from the Province.
- No short-term solution for reopening is available.



(Images of interior deterioration and water inundation captured in winter 2024/2025)

▼ + No students currently attend Carleton Elementary

- All students who previously attended Carleton are now attending or have graduated from secondary school.
- Families in the former Carleton catchment have access to nearby schools.

▼ + Future enrolment and effective management of VSB schools

- Carleton is rated H1 for seismic risk - the highest category.
- No seismic upgrades or school replacement projects are currently prioritized or supported by the Province for Carleton Elementary.
- With space available in nearby schools, capital investment in other areas with enrolment pressure is the priority.

▼ + Interest from Conseil scolaire francophone (CSF)

The VSB has a constitutional duty to reasonably consider and proportionately balance minority language rights under s. 23 of the Charter against the VSB's statutory framework. Section 23 of the Charter ensures that francophones in British Columbia are entitled to have their children attend French first language education. The Conseil scolaire francophone (CSF) is a francophone public school board that represents s. 23 rightsholders and provides francophone education throughout British Columbia, including the City of Vancouver.

On May 23, 2025, the British Columbia Supreme Court, in *Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique v British Columbia and Vancouver School Board*, 2025 BCSC 962, declared that:

In addressing the [CSF]'s requests for underutilized or surplus sites and facilities, the [VSB Board] must reasonably consider and proportionately balance the importance of minority language education as a value underpinning section 23 of the Charter.

In January 2024, the CSF made a request to the Board to acquire Sir Guy Carleton for a new CSF secondary school. In July 2024, the CSF provided additional information about their need for a second secondary school in Vancouver. In 2024, the VSB was still updating its enrolment projections and declined to make a decision regarding Sir Guy Carleton until the updated enrolment projections were available.

The VSB recently updated its enrolment projections. Therefore, the Board is considering the closure of Carleton elementary school. In doing so, the Board must consider the needs of the CSF and the importance of minority language rights in Canada.

Why Now?

The process for considering the closure of Carleton Elementary began in June 2023. However, engagement was paused to assess the impact of changes to provincial housing initiatives, changing City of Vancouver zoning conditions and the impacts these factors would have on enrolment.

Updated enrolment projections were presented to the Board in June 2025 that confirmed nearby schools can continue to accommodate students in the short and long-term. With this critical information, it is now possible to restart the process and determine whether or not to close Carleton Elementary.

Current space utilization and enrolment projections

In June 2025 updated enrolment projections were provided to the Board outlining several forecasts with two being broken down by catchment. Enrolment projections are a foundational component of the VSB's Long-Range Facilities Plan, guiding both operational and capital planning decisions. However, all projection methodologies represent a snapshot in time.

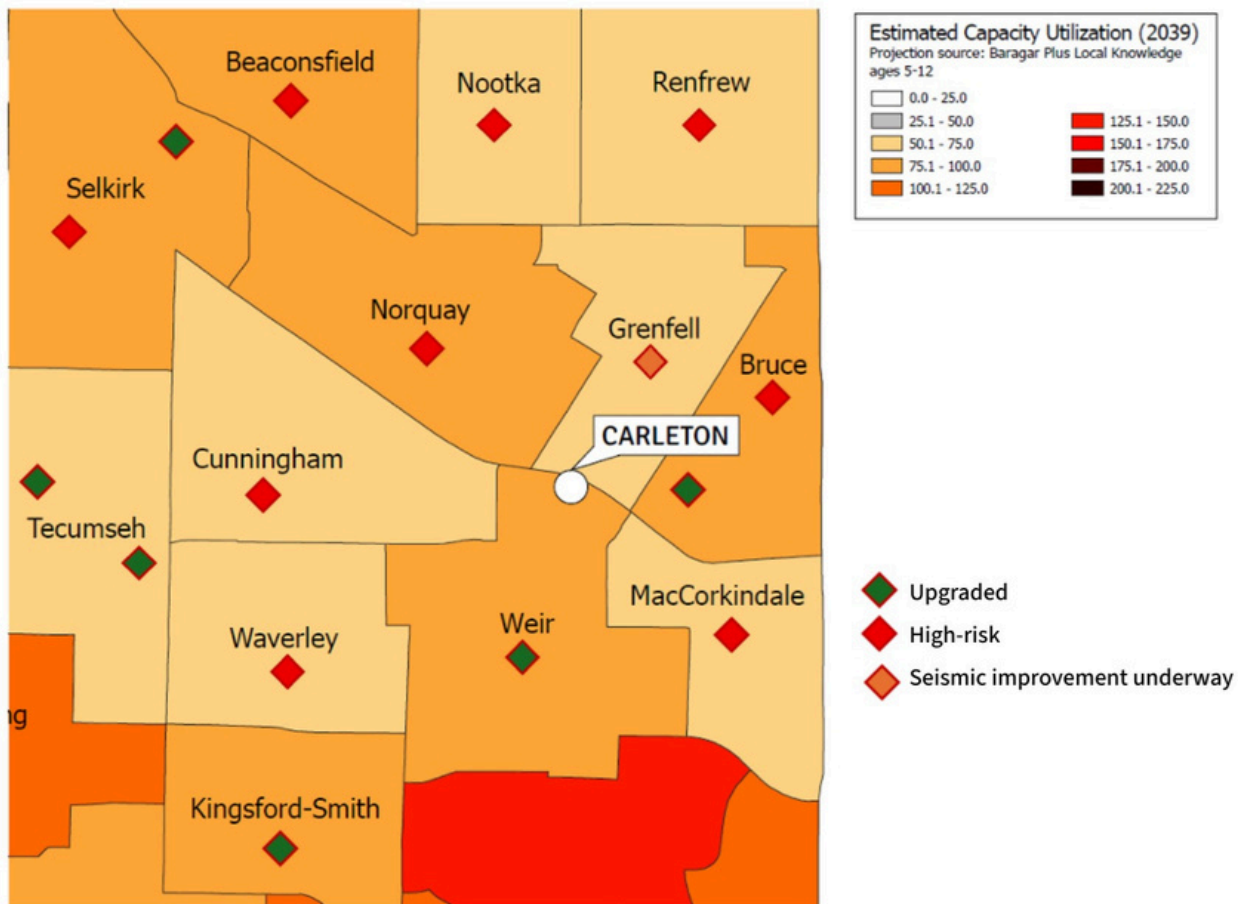
The preferred model for short- and medium-term planning is the "Baragar Plus Local Knowledge Added" scenario.

This approach integrates baseline demographic projections with local development data and student yield assumptions, resulting in a more refined and context-sensitive forecast. This model will be used to inform the District's Five-Year Capital Plan and other strategic planning initiatives.

While the "Baragar Plus Local Knowledge Added" model is most appropriate for near- and mid-term planning, longer-term projections—such as those from Metro Vancouver—can supplement strategic decisions related to land use, school site acquisition, and Board Policy 20 considerations. These high-growth scenarios are particularly useful for evaluating long-term infrastructure needs through to 2050 and beyond, especially in coordination with the City of Vancouver and UBC/UEL, who rely on Metro forecasts for regional growth planning.

Carleton is situated in the Joyce-Collingwood neighbourhood of Vancouver. Current data shows relatively stable student enrolment in this neighbourhood and that increased student enrolment from new developments in the area can be accommodated within existing nearby school facilities.

If student enrolment were to exceed the current projections, there is still sufficient space in the area to accommodate an increased number of school-aged children by increasing capacity at nearby schools.



As identified in the graphic above, the schools in proximity to Carleton Elementary (Cunningham, Norquay, Grenfell, Bruce, Weir, MacCorkindale) have an anticipated 50% to 100% utilization rate in 2039. These rates are for existing enrolling sites only and do not consider the unused capacity of Carleton Elementary.

Ways to engage

We encourage you to take part and share your perspective. There are several ways to participate:

1. You can share your thoughts between October 2 and December 2, 2025, by emailing engage@vsb.bc.ca . Your feedback will be included as part of the engagement summary report and submitted to the Board for consideration
2. Attend an in-person or online information session in October
3. Participate in an online survey that will be available October 23 - November 26, 2025
4. Request to [make a delegation presentation](#) to the Board on November 24, 2025

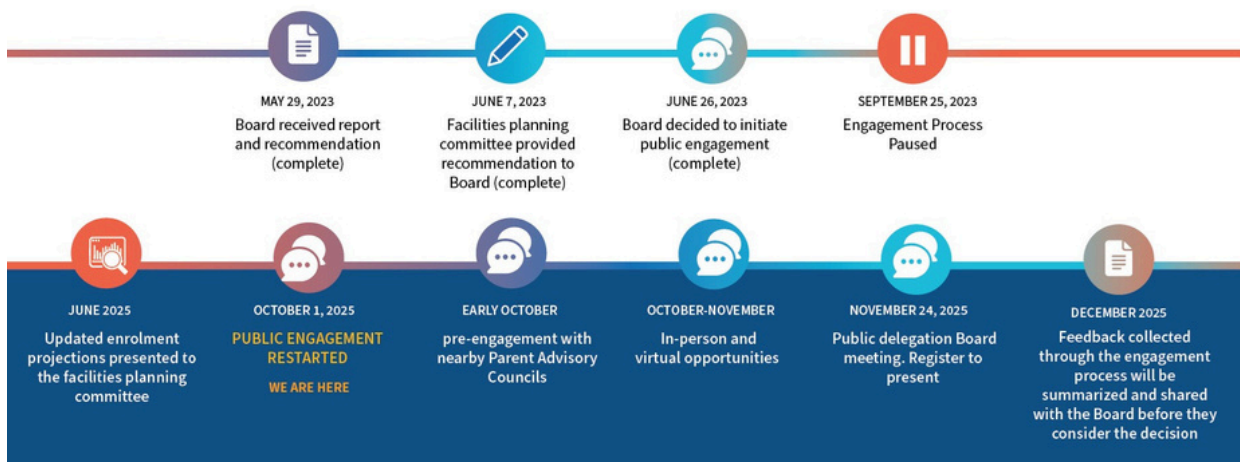
Please check back for updates to this website as the process advances.

Timeline and process

VSBC follows [Board Policy 14 School Closure](#) when considering school closure. The policy also outlines the factors that staff may assess in recommending a school closure.

A period of at least sixty (60) days will be allocated to allow for engagement to occur.

As part of the engagement, the Board will make available, in writing, the rationale being considered by the Board for the proposed closure.



May 29, 2023: Board received report and recommendation (complete) June 7, 2023:

Facilities planning committee provided its recommendation to Board (complete)

June 26, 2023: Board decided to initiate public engagement (complete)

Engagement Process Paused: On September 25, 2023, a private board motion suspended the public engagement pending the outcome of enrolment projections being completed. Updated enrolment projections were presented to the facilities planning committee in June 2025.

October 1, 2025: Public engagement restarted (We are here)

The Board decided to direct staff to restart the public engagement process for the potential closure of Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School as set out in Board Policy 14 – School Closure.

Engagement begins – written submissions open via engage@vsb.bc.ca.

Early October: pre-engagement with nearby PACs.

October-November: In-person and virtual opportunities for rights holders, stakeholders, public, staff to engage and provide their feedback about the potential closure.

November 24, 2025: Public delegation Board meeting. [Register to present](#)

December 2025: All feedback collected through the engagement process will be summarized and shared with the Board before they consider the decision.